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**Economic Development**

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To: Bruce Reed  
Elena Kagan

From: Mary L. Smith

Re: Native American Reports to the President

Date: November 30, 1998

At the Native American economic development conference on August 6, the President announced several initiatives that would improve economic development in Indian country. Attached are drafts of the reports required by the President. Although I have given you some of these drafts earlier, I thought I would give them to you in one package. With the exception of the MOU, the agencies are planning to sending the two reports to the President by December 2 or 3. Attached are the following:

- (1) Interagency plan on Native American education. At the conference, the President signed an executive order on American Indian and Alaska Native education. This executive order required an interagency plan with recommendations identifying initiatives, strategies, and ideas in order to improve Native American education. The centerpieces of the draft plan include 1000 new Native American teachers and increased funding for the Bureau of Indian Affairs school construction and operation.
- (2) Strategic plan for Native American economic development At the conference, the President directed the Small Business Administration, the Department of the Interior, and the Department of Commerce to develop a strategic plan to coordinate existing economic development initiatives and to detail future efforts. The centerpiece of the proposal would provide a toll-free number, located at the Bureau of Indian Affairs, in which tribes could access information about how the federal government can assist in economic development efforts. This number would provide one point-of-contact for tribes across all government agencies and would eliminate the need for tribes to be familiar with the intricacies of specific government programs. Calls will be answered in a problem-solving manner by staff people trained on the specific economic development programs offered by each agency. In addition, the BIA will organize business seminars throughout Indian country (staffed by various agency representatives) which will consist of both general sessions and individualized technical assistance.
- (3) Memorandum of Understanding to Implement the Access Center. The attached MOU describes how the access center and the tollfree number would be implemented. The MOU outlines the staffing, training, and commitments of each of the agencies in order to make the access center operational. We will send this MOU through the OMB vetting process.

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SUBJECT: 1000 NEW NATIVE AMERICAN TEACHERS

At the Native American Economic Development Conference, the President signed an executive order designed to improve the academic performance of American Indian and Alaska Native students in grades K-12. As part of this executive order, an interagency plan is to be developed with recommendations identifying initiatives, strategies, and ideas for future action to support the goals of the order.

American Indian children have the highest drop-out rate and the lowest high school completion rate of any racial or ethnic group in the country. Despite this tremendous need, American Indian school children have few role models to guide them. Of the Nation's more than 2 million elementary and secondary teachers, less than 1 percent -- only 18,000 teachers, are American Indian/Alaska Native. There is an approximately 35 percent turnover rate in all schools that serve predominantly Native American populations.

Recognizing these needs and challenges, the centerpiece of the interagency plan will be to train 1000 new Native American teachers. Our goal is to both increase the number of American Indians entering the teaching field and to enhance the skills of those already in the pipeline.

**1000 New Teachers for Native American Students.** This initiative creates an American Indian Corps of Teachers (ACT). As there are only 18,000 Native American teachers in the country, an additional 1000 is a significant increase. This proposal has three parts: (1) a fellowship program that will support the training of 1000 new American Indian and Alaska Native teachers over 4 years by providing for their expenses while attending school, including child care; (2) funding for 25 grants to educational institutions, in partnership with tribal colleges, to create teacher training programs in Native American communities; and (3) creating five professional development centers to provide continuing education for in-service teachers to improve the quality of teaching in Native American communities. Below is a more complete listing of each of the three parts:

- **Fellowships for Native American Students.** This initiative would provide fellowships to at least 1000 Native American students in order to help with their expenses while obtaining a degree in teaching. Approximately 70 percent of students entering tribal colleges are single American Indian women who are aged 30 and above and who have dependent children. These fellowship funds would be used for living expenses, housing,

food, course materials, and childcare. These funds would be offset by other financial aid that the students receive such as Pell grants. For every year that they received fellowship funds, fellowship recipients would be required to work as teachers in areas with high concentrations of Native American students for one year or would be required to repay all or a prorata portion of their assistance. For instance, if a student received fellowship funds for four years, she would be required to teach in a predominantly Native American school for four years. As approximately 90 percent of Native American students attend public schools, fellowship recipients would teach not only in the 185 Bureau of Indian Affairs schools, but in public schools as well. (Cost: \$15,000,000 with average award per student \$15,000).

- **Program Startup and Curriculum Development.** This part of the initiative establishes 25 partnerships between four-year institutions and Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities (TCC's) to fund program and curriculum development. This funding is needed to set up these programs because while the federal government funded such programs in the 1970's, there has been no funding since that time. Of the 31 tribal colleges, 26 currently offer some teacher course work. The tribal colleges are chosen as the partners because their students are predominantly Native American, and they are located in areas with high Native American populations. This funding would essentially permit the tribal colleges to offer degree programs on site. Funding would be used for curriculum development, hiring of teachers, and administrative support. (Cost: \$12,500,000.)
- **Continuing Education for In-Service and New Teachers.** This part of the initiative provides continuing education for both in-service teachers and new teachers. This initiative funds five Centers for the Advancement of American Indian Teaching and Learning. These centers will offer instruction via distance learning in order to reach a larger number of teachers. These centers will offer opportunities to share best practices in Indian education, provide workshops, and allow for existing teacher to learn the latest methods and ideas associated with the teaching of mathematics, reading, and other core subjects. This part of the initiative complements the teacher quality initiatives the President has already supported. (Cost: \$5,000,000.)

December 1, 1998

The Honorable William Jefferson Clinton  
The White House  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Attached is the American Indian and Alaska Native Education Interagency Plan. The Interagency Plan was developed pursuant the Executive Order 13096 of August 6, 1998 on American Indian and Alaska Native Education.

The goals of the Executive Order on American Indian and Alaska Native Education recognize significant and persistent issues affecting the education of American Indians and Alaska Natives. The Interagency Plan presents two centerpiece initiatives to focus immediate attention on these issues: Recruit and prepare 1000 new Native teachers for American Indian and Alaska Native students and Continue support to address the significant need for Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) school construction and repair.

The plan also identifies initiatives that respond to Federal Indian Impact Aid school construction needs, the needs to expand the use of technology, improve learning readiness, and to increase high school graduation and post secondary attendance rates of American Indian and Alaska Native students.

We are confident that the initiatives developed by the Interagency Task Force will further the goals the Executive Order on American Indian and Alaska Native Education.

Sincerely,

Richard W. Riley  
Secretary of Education

Bruce Babbitt  
Secretary of The Interior

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American Indian and Alaska Native Education Policy Development

Interagency Task Force Report to the President

November, 1998

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On August 6, 1998, President Clinton signed Executive Order 13096 on American Indian and Alaska Native Education. The order affirms the unique political and legal relationship of the Federal government with tribal governments and recognizes the federal government's special responsibility for the education of American Indian and Alaska Natives. The order establishes six goals for American Indian and Alaska Native education. The goals of the order are:

1. Improving reading and mathematics;
2. Increasing high school completion and post-secondary attendance rates;
3. Reducing the influence of long-standing factors that impede educational performance, such as poverty and substance abuse;
4. Creating strong, safe, and drug-free school environments;
5. Improving science education; and
6. Expanding the use of educational technology.

The goals of the order recognize significant and persistent issues affecting the education of American Indian and Alaska Native education. The Executive Order established an Interagency Task Force and required as its first activity the development of an interagency plan. Participating agencies have identified programmatic and initiative areas for future consideration, which are supportive of the goals of the order. From this listing an Interagency Plan focusing on major initiative areas has been developed and is herein described.

The Interagency Plan proposes two centerpiece initiatives: the training of 1000 new American Indian Teachers and responding to the significant continuing need for Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) facility construction and repair. The plan proposes other important initiatives that the Interagency Task Force deems worthy for consideration. These initiatives include responding to the school construction and repair needs of Federal Indian Impact Aid School districts, expanding and improving the use of technology, improving learning readiness and increasing high school completion and post secondary attendance of American Indian and Alaska Native students.

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## I. INTRODUCTION:

The Interagency Plan for the Education of American Indians and Alaska Natives was developed pursuant to Executive Order 13095 on American Indian and Alaska Native Education by the Interagency Task Force created by the Executive Order. The ideas within the plan were developed with agency consultation with American Indian Tribal governments and reviews through memos and presentations to The National Indian Education Association, The National Congress of American Indians and the National Advisory Council on Indian Education.

The interagency plan, which will be developed each year by the Task Force, represents the Interagency Task Force's short-term plan. The Executive order also requires the development of a long-term Comprehensive Federal Indian Education Policy. The various activities of the Executive Order, the short-term plan along with other executive order activities will form a basis for the development of the long-term comprehensive federal Indian education policy required by the order.

## II. Interagency Plan

### A. CENTERPIECE INITIATIVES

The Interagency Plan has two centerpiece initiatives: train 1000 new American Indian teachers, and meet the significant unmet need for Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) facilities construction and repair.

American Indian children have the highest dropout rates and among the lowest academic achievement rates of any population group in the country. Despite this tremendous need American Indian school children have few role models to guide them. Of the Nation's more than two million elementary and secondary teachers, less than one percent – only 18,000 are American Indian/Alaska Native.

Compared to other schools, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) schools are generally in poorer condition and have unsatisfactory environmental conditions. There exists major health and safety issues in these schools with two thirds of the educational facilities being over 30 years old and more than one-quarter over 50 years old. The situation for BIA schools is a difficult one, as they must rely exclusively on the federal appropriations process to fund their operations, maintenance costs, and facility construction projects.

#### 1. 1000 New Teachers for American Indian and Alaska Native Students

This initiative creates an American Indian Corps of Teachers (ACT) to recruit and prepare 1000 new American Indian Teachers to teach at a high level of skill in schools with predominant American Indian student populations. The proposal has three parts: (1) funding 25 grants to educational institutions, in partnership with tribal colleges, to create teacher training programs in American Indian/ Alaska Native communities; (2) creating five professional development centers to provide continuing education for in-service teachers to improve the quality of teaching in American Indian/Alaska Native communities; and (3) a fellowship program that will support the training of 1000 new American Indian and Alaska Native teachers over 4 years by providing for their expenses while attending school, including child care.

There is a very high annual teacher turnover rate of 35% in all schools (state, public, Tribal, and Federal schools) that serve predominant American Indian student populations and a very low number of Indian teachers. Many teachers often come to rural reservation communities ill prepared for their life in rural, isolated areas and are poorly trained to be successful with

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linguistically and culturally unique learner populations. Teachers who do teach American Indian and Alaska Native student populations have not been trained in the latest methods in teaching gateway subjects such as reading and math.

There are jobs readily available at a significant annual rate to allow for large numbers of Indian teachers to be employed within their own communities. The unemployment rate among rural reservation American Indians is extremely high. Approximately 70% of students entering Tribal colleges are single American Indian women who are in their 30's with dependent children. A teacher education program provides a career avenue for a significant population who are committed to live and work in their home communities.

There are a large number of American Indian paraprofessionals working in schools that serve Indian students. There are currently 2700 Academic aides (90% of the total) employed in BIA funded schools. These schools educate approximately 10% of the American Indian student population. State public Schools that educate predominate American Indian student populations also employ academic aids. It is estimated that the total number of academic aid positions in schools educating American Indian students in Reservation areas is approximately 8000. The program would provide a career development opportunity for many of these individuals.

## **2. BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS (BIA) School Construction and Repair**

The final FY 1999 budget provides \$60 million to replace older, unsafe and dilapidated schools on reservations in accordance with a Congressionally approved priority list of replacement schools, and would provide for much-needed health- and safety-related repairs and improvements that together comprise a \$700 million backlog. In the FY 1999 budget, the President requested \$87 million, which is a \$33 million (61%) increase over FY 1998, to support the Administrations Initiative. The President has made a commitment to responding to the serious need for Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) school facilities construction and repair. Because of the very high need, this centerpiece initiative seeks to continue efforts to respond to this need.

**With two-thirds of the education facilities over 30 years old, and more than one-quarter over 50 years old, the backlog to correct life safety and other code deficiencies and to replace existing facilities exceeds \$1 billion and is growing.** Compared to other schools, BIA schools are generally in poorer condition and have more unsatisfactory environmental conditions according to a December 1997 GAO report. To remedy this and assist them to achieve their full educational potential, Indian students should attend school in facilities that do not pose a threat to their health and safety. The situation for BIA schools is a difficult one, as they must rely exclusively on the Federal appropriations process to fund their operations, maintenance costs, and construction projects. The BIA facilities management program is located at the Facilities Management and Construction Center in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Tribes continue to fund more of their education facilities projects and programs through Self-Determination and Self-Governance contracts, grants, and compacts. This supports Presidential Directives and Executive Orders (April 29, 1994 Memorandum "Government-to-Government Relations..."; Executive Orders 13084 "Consultation and Coordination..."; and 13096 "American Indian and Alaska Native Education").

The age and deteriorating condition of BIA schools, employee housing and related education facilities is a major concern for Federal education program managers and Department officials. If conditions at some schools are not corrected, students and teachers may be at significant risk, which may result in school closures or significant liability to the Federal Government, and requests for emergency funding to correct hazardous conditions can be expected to increase.

## **B. OTHER INITIATIVES RECOMMENDED BY THE TASK FORCE.**

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The Interagency Task Force identified a number of important agency initiatives supportive of the goals of the executive Order on American Indian and Alaska Native Education. These initiatives include responding to the school construction and repair need of Federal Indian Impact Aid school districts, expanding and improving the use of technology, improving learning readiness and increasing high school completion and post secondary attendance of American Indian and Alaska Native students

### **1. School Facilities Construction and Repair for Federal Impact Aid School Districts Serving American Indian Student:**

All Indian reservation land is held in trust by the federal government for the tribe and cannot be taxed by state or local governments. Most local school construction bonds are paid back through property tax assessment. A local state public school district that has a large portion of federally owned land not subject to tax cannot float a bond or borrow money for its public schools because it has no revenue stream with which to pay back the money it borrows. Therefore, school districts that are composed primarily or entirely of Indian lands are not able to float construction bonds to finance school renovation and replacement. The Indian Impact Aid School districts serving predominantly American Indian have school facilities and school repair issues similar to BIA schools. There is a need to respond to the school construction needs of Indian Impact Aid school districts

### **2. Increase the utilization of Technology in Schools serving Predominant Indian Student Populations**

#### **a. Bureau of Indian Affairs Technology:**

National studies such as the Rand Report suggest that for schools to reach full potential for technology, they need to invest between \$300 and \$500 per student yearly. Many states, such as Iowa, have enacted special technology initiatives to fund school technology. These states provide extra funds for infrastructure, teacher training and extra personnel. Bureau-funded schools do not have access to these funds, nor is there any special appropriation from Congress to cover such costs. In comparison to school districts of equal size, the Bureau should have 7 million dollars to support its Education Technology Program. The E-rate also offers promise to help the nation's schools with discounts to pay for connectivity, wiring, and technology infrastructure. However, this program has not started to reimburse schools.

OIEP's Access Native America Reinvention Lab, a NPR project, plans to connect all 185 Bureau-funded schools to the Department of the Interior's Internet backbone system by the end of the year 2000. The goal is to have Internet access in every classroom, school office and library. We have leveraged this initiative through a variety of funding sources including: funds from the OIEP school statistics initiative, 19 schools participate in the Technology Innovation Challenge Fund (4 Directions Project), 28 schools participate in the Technology Literacy Challenge fund (TLCF), and the remainder use local school funds such as ISEP, Goals 2000 and ESEA for technology. To date OIEP has fully connected 76 schools, with 40 more coming on line within the next 90 days. This effort is forced to use existing funds that are already insufficient to meet the educational needs of Indian students.

In addition, current funding is not sufficient to cover technology and distance learning costs such as staff training, to hire the additional staff members needed to maintain the new school networks, to design educational software integrated with Indian content, to build web-site and other electronic networking devices, or to buy a sufficient amount of modern multi-media computers capable of reaching the Internet. In a sampling of the 48 schools that submitted applications for the TLCF grants, 50% of the computers in schools are more than five years old and only 10% are capable of reading the Internet.

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b. Increase and strengthen interagency technology efforts:

Agriculture: The USDA 1994 Research Program is a new competitive research grants program which will build the research capacity at the thirty 1994 Institutions (Land-Grant Tribal Colleges) by supporting agricultural research activities that address tribal, national, and multistate priorities important to USDA. In addition, the Tribal Colleges Equity Grants Program if funded will provide \$50,000 to each of the 30 Land-Grant Tribal colleges to enhance education opportunities by strengthening instructional programs in the food and agricultural sciences.

Under USDA's Extension Indian Reservation Program and land grant universities provide qualified Extension Agents who are part of, and have access to, university resources to work on reservations. The university attempts to recruit qualified American Indians for Extension Agent positions. In a report prepared in 1990, the Intertribal Agriculture Council identified the need for 80 Extension Agents for agriculture on reservations of 120,000 acres or larger. Additional funds are needed to provide adequate funding to support the needed Extension Agents for agriculture to provide educational programs for youth development, foods and nutrition, parenting, financial management, and personal health maintenance.

Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loan and Grant Program (DLT): USDA funds distance learning and telemedicine projects awarded on a competitive basis to encourage and improve the use of telecommunications and computer networks to provide educational and medical linkages for rural areas. These projects have historically leveraged four dollars for each dollar USDA awards.

**3. Improve The learning Readiness of American Indian students:**

a. Expand Early Childhood Education:

American Indian children often do not come to school ready to learn. They have often had to face serious health and safety issues, which may have mitigated their potential to learn. They do not have access to early childhood education programs, which are linguistically, culturally, and developmentally appropriate. An important strategy to the long-term improvement of American Indian education is to significantly increase the availability of early childhood education programs for American Indian Learners. It is recommended that early childhood education and parent education, with language development, be key priorities for Indian education at the federal level by establishing a grant program to focus on this effort. The goal should be to make early childhood education available to every American Indian child as a major strategy through significantly increasing the amount of funding available through all existing authorities

The Indian Education Act has within its FY 1999 budget an appropriation to establish a few early childhood education sites.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs funds 22 Family and Child Education (FACE) projects, which serve 1,500 families. The FACE program provides early childhood education opportunities for Indian children by targeting preschool children ages 0-5 and their parents.

**A. INCREASE AND EXPAND INTERAGENCY EFFORTS**

The Corporation for National Service currently funds American Indian programs directly through a 1% set-aside of the overall funding for AmeriCorps programs and a 3% set-aside in Learn and Serve America. These programs impact Indian Education in myriad ways, from providing scholarships for higher education to offering activities that increase children's' readiness to learn;

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from increasing reading and math scores to improving learning through hands-on student service. Out of more than 550 tribes, 31 tribal colleges, and numerous national and urban Indian organizations, the Corporation has funding relationships with approximately 35 tribes, 2 tribal colleges, and 1 national Indian organization. The Corporation is committed to expanding programming to meet the critical educational needs of Indian youth, and finding ways to better reach urban Indians and national Indian organizations.

#### **4. Increasing High School Completion and Post-Secondary Attendance**

Surveys of American Indian student views of why they left school indicate that they felt pushed out of school and mistreated by teachers and administrators. Students spoke of dissatisfaction with school, feelings of mistrust and alienation, academic difficulties and the importance of family responsibilities, which often required students to leave school to work at home or get a job. Oppressive school policies and poor school climates were also important reasons for leaving school.

American Indian students who left school rejected the schools' academic offerings as dull and unconnected to their lives. This did not mean that youth left school because the content was not subject-specific enough to American Indian culture; rather school was not perceived as an avenue to obtain the knowledge or skills they desired. Students saw emphasis on basic remedial or vocational tracking in high schools as limiting their opportunities. Students acknowledged parental and home support; however, problems with school were equally as important. Though pregnancy is often cited as a major reason why female students drop out, schools have not accepted the birth of a child when considering strategies for high school completion (Deyhle, American Indian Education).

The Bureau of Indian Affairs indicates a yearly dropout rate of 14%; this figure defines students in grades 9-12 that leave school and do not enroll in another school during that year. The Indian Nations at Risk Report indicated a 36% dropout rate as the percentage of tenth grade Indian students nationwide who later left school. At the same time, Indian students are not entering and finishing college as they should be. American Indian students have among the lowest high school and college completion rates in the nation. American Indian students have the lowest rates of returning to eventually complete high school or an equivalent program. Approximately one-half (54 percent) of the schools with high concentrations of American Indian learners offer college preparatory programs as compared to 76 percent of the schools with few (less than 25 percent) Native students enrolled.

##### **a. Expand Adult Education:**

The majority of American Indians who qualify for post secondary education have qualified by obtaining a GED. Adult education opportunities have decline for American Indians. There is a need to increase the availability of Adult education opportunities for American Indians

##### **b. Increase and expand Inter-agency efforts:**

- \* USDA's Native American Institutions Endowment Fund builds educational capacity in the areas of curricula design and materials development, faculty development and preparation for teaching, instruction delivery systems, experimental learning, equipment and instrumentation for teaching, and student recruitment and retention.

- \* The Fellowship program of the Office of Indian Education DOE has been used to support graduate and undergraduate degrees for American Indian students It is not currently funded.

- \* Strengthen ESEA provisions affecting the education of American Indian Students

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- \* The DHHS funds a number of grant programs that provide summer enrichment programs to American Indians and Alaska Natives. A number of these programs bring students to a local university campus for a minimum of two weeks. The curriculum includes reading, math, and science. These are competitive grant programs; however, with limited funds these are not available to all target population areas of the country.
- \* There are other DHHS programs that provide tutoring and mentoring services and, again, these are competitive grant programs with limited funds and are not available to all target population areas of the country.
- \* The IHS has an extern program that provides clinical experience to students during a non-academic year.
- \* The DHHS has a number of scholarship programs and loan repayment programs. These programs are to recruit and retain health professionals in health professional shortage areas. The scholarship programs provide funding for students enrolled in courses that will prepare them for acceptance into health professional schools, e.g., nursing, pharmacy, medicine, etc.
- \* The Department of Housing and Urban Development maintains and promotes education-related programs and resources important to achieving the goals of the order. In order to achieve success in these areas, budget support and focused attention on American Indian Alaska Native students is essential.
- \* An HUD grant through the Drug Elimination program may be used to support Indian education efforts when focused on youth drug prevention activities, including (1) redesign or modification of public spaces in Tribal housing developments to provide increased utilization for youth related purposes, such as a tutoring or learning center, (2) provision of equipment, transportation, and personnel costs of operating educational programs related in some way to drug abuse prevention, and (3) support for youth development strategies such as Boys & Girls Clubs, PRIDE, Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.), 4-H, and Scouts.
- \* Through the technical assistance portion of the Native American Housing Block Grant program, ONAP will develop a "Future Homebuyer" learning unit that will include a youth oriented module. The youth module will provide the appropriate lesson plans to better educate Native American and Alaska Native students on the use and abuse of credit and financing, as well as budgeting and spending, which will enhance their readiness skills for such future life coping needs as securing a home loan or balancing a checkbook.
- \* Expand the Corporation for National Service education related programs for American Indian Tribes to include expanding AmeriCorps Tribal programs, creating 10 reservation based Indian youth corps programs to complete education related service projects such as tutoring and mentoring, supporting American reads programs and developing a Tribal College Service Learning Initiative within Learn and Serve American Higher Education programs.
- \* CNS recommends supporting the development of 8 regional tribal commissions on service with increased support for their administration, training and program development; and establish a set-aside of VISTA to help build tribes capacity to promote, establish, and administer service programs in tribal communities.

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### III. Other Executive Order Activities

#### Future Action:

The ideas developed within the Interagency Strategic Plan focus on significant ideas developed over the past year on the part of the Departments of Education and the Interior. It also includes areas identified by other participating members of the Interagency Task Force which are currently reflected in agency budget requests or which relate ideas for future agency consideration.

Both budgetary and non budgetary ideas will become a focus of discussion and activity during each year to come as the task force works on other Executive Order activities such as the interagency resource guide, the Research Agenda, Agency Consultation, Pilot Sites, Agency Consultation, etc.

The Interagency Task force will submit an Interagency Plan each year following this first year's plan. Each year the plan will consider the progress made on Ideas and initiatives and will incorporate new ideas and approaches designed to fulfill the goals of the order.

In addition to the forming of the interagency Task Force group, the development of a work plan and the determination of agency initiatives, the executive order includes several significant activities that will occur within the next two years. These activities include:

- Interagency Resource Guide: At the next meeting of the task force the representatives will submit information on all education-related programs and resources that support the goals of the order. It will be the responsibility of the Department of Education to receive, compile, publish and disseminate this guide. The next meeting of the Task Force will
- Research Agenda: The Department of Education in consultation with the National Advisory Council on Indian Education and the Task Force, will develop and implement a comprehensive research agenda. The agenda will include: establishing baseline data on academic achievement of AI/AN students, evaluating promising practices, and evaluating the role of native language and culture in the development of educational strategies. The department of Education has included this activity in the current fiscal budget.
- Regional Partnership Forums: The Department of Education and the Interior, in collaboration with the Task Force, and Federal, tribal, state and local governments will convene a series of forums. The purpose of these forums will be to identify promising practices and approaches on how to share information, provide assistance to schools, develop partnerships, and coordinate intergovernmental strategies supportive of accomplishing the goals of the order. The Department of Education and Interior have an interagency committee that is beginning to address the tasks of this activity.
- School Pilot Sites: The Department of Education and Interior will identify public and Bureau of Indian Affairs funded schools that can serve as models for other schools. These pilot sites will be recipients of comprehensive technical assistance in support of the goals of the order.
- Memoranda of Agreement (MOA): Participating agencies may develop, where appropriate to support the goals of the order, MOAs with one another to meet the educational needs of American Indian and Alaska Native students.

#### IV. Long Term Strategy: The Comprehensive Federal Indian Education Policy:

The Interagency Task Force will continue to develop ideas contained within the interagency plan and will each year submit a plan to the President. The task force has developed a work plan and will work on and report the accomplishment of other required activities of the Executive Order.

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Within two years the Task Force will produce a policy designed to: improve federal interagency cooperation; promote intergovernmental collaboration; and assist tribal governments in meeting the unique educational needs, including the need to preserve, revitalize and use native language and cultural traditions. The long term policy will be informed by consultation with American Indian Tribal governments and by the results and insights gained from the implementation of the interagency short term plans and other activities of the executive order.

December 14, 1998

The Honorable William Jefferson Clinton  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Attached is our joint report, as requested in your August 6, 1998, Memorandum, regarding the development of a Federal strategic plan for coordinating existing economic development initiatives for Native Americans and Alaska Native communities. The report articulates the components of the plan, which includes the identification of current actions and the proposal of future actions that will improve Federal coordination, increase tribal access to Federal economic development information and assistance, increase economic opportunities within tribal communities, and identify gaps in the delivery of Federal economic development assistance.

The report reflects our consultation with the Domestic Policy Council, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Department of Housing and Urban Development. After your review and approval of the report, our next steps will be to implement the current actions identified and to develop further the identified future actions.

We are confident that our proposal will further your goal to improve Federal coordination in the area of economic development as well as meet the needs of the agencies, tribal communities, the private sector and non-profit community that is working to do build strong tribal economies .

Sincerely,

William M. Daley  
Secretary of Commerce

Bruce Babbitt  
Secretary of Interior

Aida Alvarez  
Administrator, Small  
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## **Economic Development in Indian Country**

### **Joint Report to the President**

**December 14, 1998**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On August 6, 1998, President Clinton directed the Department of Interior (DOI), the Department of Commerce (DOC), and the Small Business Administration (SBA) to report back within 90 days with a strategic plan for coordinating Federal existing economic development initiatives for Native American and Alaska Native communities, including initiatives involving the private sector. In developing the plan, DOI, DOC and SBA were further directed to consult with all interested parties, including tribal governments and other Federal agencies and offices – particularly, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Department of Transportation (DOT), and Department of Agriculture (DOA). Under the Memorandum, DOI, DOC and SBA have joint leadership in the development and implementation of the plan and will use existing and propose new resources to support the elements of the plan.

Based on the work to date of the Subcommittee on Economic Development under The White House Domestic Policy Council Working Group on American Indians and Alaska Natives, including the conference on *Bringing Economic Self-Determination to Indian Communities*, this document articulates a plan in response to the President's Memorandum that is aimed to improve coordination among Federal agencies by (1) increasing access to Federal economic development programs and assistance, (2) increasing opportunities in tribal communities and (2) identifying and addressing gaps in the delivery of Federal economic development assistance. Appendix A is the Presidential Memorandum on Economic Development in American Indian and Alaska Native Communities, which provides the backdrop for the plan. Appendix B is the detailed proposal for the Native American Economic Development Access Center.

The ultimate goal of the plan is to improve the coordination of Federal economic development programs and initiatives, thereby, increasing the effectiveness of, and access to, such programs in Indian country.

## I. INTRODUCTION

### **Commitment to Promote Indian Economic Development**

The Clinton Administration has worked hard to honor tribal sovereignty and strengthen government-to-government relations with Indian tribes.<sup>1</sup> Yet, too often, as America moves forward, American Indians and Alaska Natives have been left outside mainstream economic progress. Today, the Bureau of Indian Affairs reports that 49% of adult reservation Indians are without full-time work. The President and the Congress have made clear that economic self-determination is an essential element of Indian self-determination. See Executive Memorandum on Economic Development in American Indian and Alaska Native communities, dated August 6, 1998; 25 U.S.C. § 1451 *et seq.* (congressional statement of national policy). The Departments of Commerce, Interior and the Small Business Administration are committed to using existing resources and authorities to the fullest to assist Indian tribes to achieve economic self-determination, *see e.g.*, 25 U.S.C. §§ 47, 450 (e) (b), 1542-1544, and, where appropriate and necessary, to seek additional resources to help tribes establish reservation economies to a point where the average Indian standard of living is comparable to the national standard of living.

### **Establishment of the Inter-Agency Subcommittee on Economic Development**

In February, 1998, The White House Domestic Policy Council Working Group on American Indians and Alaskan Natives, chaired by Secretary of Interior Bruce Babbitt, established a Subcommittee on Economic Development. The Subcommittee aims to (1) promote coordination among Federal agencies with existing economic development responsibilities; (2) increase access to Federal economic development programs and initiatives by the tribes and Indian owned businesses; and (3) build awareness about other Federal programs and initiatives that are supportive of tribal economic development efforts.

Several meetings of the Subcommittee were held during Spring 1998. Nearly a dozen agencies were identified as having programs and initiatives that directly or indirectly impact economic development in Indian country. The Subcommittee recognized the difficulty faced by tribes and Indian-owned businesses in trying to locate and access this wide range of Federal assistance. Also recognized was that many synergies exist between the diverse programs and initiatives, and that each agency's efforts to serve Indian country would be strengthened by effective coordination at the Federal level. In learning about the new programs and initiatives that some agencies planned to introduce in 1998, the Subcommittee decided to organize a national conference that would showcase these and other existing Federal initiatives, as well as highlight initiatives by the private sector and tribal and Indian-owned business success stories.

### **White House Conference on Economic Development**

The conference, *Building Economic Self-Determination in Indian Communities*, was held August 5-6, 1998, in Washington, D.C. Sponsoring agencies included The White House, Departments of

Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, Justice, Labor, Transportation, Treasury, the Indian Health Service, the Comptroller of the Currency, and the Small Business Administration. Panel sessions covered Indian country success stories; building infrastructure and a positive climate for business; expanding business opportunities; Alaska Native economic development; rural business; banking in Indian communities; Federal contracting opportunities. In addition, breakout sessions were held on franchising; the Internet and electronic commerce; welfare to work initiatives; tourism; exporting; communications and technology; diversifying tribal economies; and manufacturing.

The historic conference was attended by nearly 1,000 tribal, private sector and federal officials. The Secretaries of Agriculture, Commerce, Interior, Justice, Labor, and the Administrator of the Small Business Administration provided official addresses underscoring their agency's commitment to opening the doors of economic opportunity to the Indian community. The conference highlight was a keynote address by President Clinton on August, 6, 1998, in which he pledged the Administration's assistance on several important fronts to boost economic development in Indian country.

### **President's Memorandum Calling for Improve Federal Coordination**

The conference demonstrated the effectiveness of a strong, coordinated Federal effort. In order to ensure an on-going process, President Clinton, during his address to the conference, directed the Department of Interior, the Department of Commerce, and the Small Business Administration to report back within 90 days with a strategic plan for

*"coordinating existing economic development initiatives for Native American and Alaska Native communities, including initiatives involving the private sector."*

As the President's Memorandum directed, the Secretary of Interior, Secretary of Commerce and the Administrator of the Small Business Administration would jointly lead the development of the plan and consult with all interested parties, including tribal governments and other Federal agencies and offices – particularly, the Departments of Housing and Urban Development, Transportation and Agriculture. The plan will build upon current efforts in the agencies and detail future efforts such as providing technical assistance, enhancing infrastructure, and development software. Appendix A contains the President's Memorandum in its entirety.

### **Listening Session on Economic Development**

In developing this plan, the Subcommittee and nearly 100 tribal officials attended a listening session on economic development issues co-hosted by the National Congress of American Indians and the Commerce Department's Economic Development Administration in October, 1998, in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Among other things, the tribal officials highlighted the need for Federal economic development programs and initiatives to be more easily identifiable and accessible.

### **Proposed Inter-Agency Plan**

In response to the President's Memorandum, and feedback from the listening session with the tribal officials, the Subcommittee proposes the following elements that will constitute its strategic plan:

1. Increasing access to Federal economic development programs and assistance;
2. Increasing economic development opportunities within tribal communities; and
3. Identifying gaps in Federal economic development efforts that may be addressed through administrative and/or legislative remedies.

This plan serves as a starting point for improved Federal coordination and should be viewed as a "living document" -- one that will be amended and modified in consultation and partnership with Indian country.

## **II. INCREASING ACCESS TO FEDERAL PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES**

The most important aspects for successful economic development in Indian country is access to information and assistance. This includes topics such as listings of available federal programs and their use, assistance on the development of business plans and other business management and administrative guidance, direction to private capital sources, assistance in developing marketing, import/export initiatives and specialized individual technical assistance and training.

A. The centerpiece of the Subcommittee's plan to increase access and improve coordination involves the following proposed actions:

- ▶ **Creation of an Information Referral Center on Economic Development.** The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) proposes, for inclusion in the FY 2000 budget request of the President, the creation of a Native American Economic Development Access Center (NAEDAC). The center would provide tribes, Indian-owned businesses, the private sector and non-profits easy access to information on a wide range of Federal economic development programs and initiatives. The new center would use a toll-free 1-800 number, the Internet and other technology to enable easy and affordable access by the Indian community. The center could be modeled, in part, after the success of Commerce's Trade Information Center, which is a comprehensive resource for information on all Federal government export assistance programs. The BIA would create and provide the basic support for the center. Appendix B contains a detailed proposal on the functions of the center.
- ▶ **Memorandum of Understanding Between Key Agencies.** In order to ensure the effectiveness of the NAEDAC center, a Memorandum of Understanding would be implemented between the BIA and key federal agencies with economic development responsibilities. The agreement would outline the responsibilities of each agency in

support of the NAEDAC, including the contribution of data and materials and the training of the center's staff on the objectives of each agency's programs.

B. The Subcommittee also has identified other actions that currently are being developed and implemented that will help to increase access and improve coordination:

- ▶ **Inventory of Existing Federal Programs.** Work is underway by members of the Subcommittee to produce a comprehensive database of all Federal economic development programs and initiatives impacting Indian country. The BIA will create the database and make it available on their web site and on CD Rom. The inventory also will be produced in hard copy, modeled, in part, after the success of USDA's *Guide to USDA Programs for American Indians and Alaska Natives*, which provides a comprehensive overview of the many important USDA programs available to tribes, including programs administered by the Rural Business-Cooperative Service, Rural Housing Service and Rural Utilities Service. The initial inventory will be completed by the BIA by March, 1999.
- ▶ **Strengthening the Codetalk Web Site.** Managed by HUD's Office of Native American Programs, this web site is the oldest federal web site specifically targeting Native Americans. Presently, the site focuses on general Indian housing issues, but is being revamped so that it can serve as a portal to other existing Federal resources for Native Americans on areas, such as welfare reform and economic development. HUD proposes implementing a Memorandum of Understanding with other agencies desiring to participate in *Codetalk*.
- ▶ **Strengthen Cooperation Between Agency Field Efforts.** The Subcommittee has identified the need for closer cooperation between SBA's Tribal Business Information Centers and the Native American Business Development Centers funded by Commerce's Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA). Between these two agencies, a total of approximately 22 sites are strategically located throughout Indian country, primarily in conjunction with the tribal college system. The centers' products and services need to be as comprehensive as possible and each site should contain an identical reservoir of information and personal assistance.

In addition, the Subcommittee recommends that SBA and MBDA coordinate with the following Federal resources aimed at improving tribal economic development: USDA's Rural Development offices and personnel with expertise in business, community, and housing programs in states with large American Indian reservations; Commerce's U.S. Export Assistance Center, which has a team of experts in key field offices to promote exports by American Indian businesses, particularly in the areas of jewelry, arts and crafts, tourism and entertainment; and HUD's Community Buildings program.

### III. INCREASING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN TRIBAL COMMUNITIES



The Subcommittee also has identified actions, some of which are currently being developed and some of which are proposed for the future, that will help to support and enhance economic development opportunities within tribal communities. The Subcommittee will work to ensure that information about these activities are disseminated throughout the Federal government and implemented in a coordinated fashion:

A. The following actions are proposed by the Subcommittee to enhance opportunities within tribal communities:

- ▶ **Business Deals on Wheels Seminars.** The BIA's FY 2000 proposal for the Native American Economic Development Access Center identifies the need for a coordinated effort to bring existing Federal initiatives directly to Indian communities. Because SBA's Tribal Business Information Centers and MBDA's Native American Business Development Centers are geographically stationary and sometimes hard to reach by those unable to travel, a traveling business seminar would be developed by the Center and manned by a combination of headquarters and field agency personnel, as well as private resources. The seminars would consist of both general sessions and individualized technical assistance on a variety of topics, such as tourism, banking, etc. The seminars would be tailored, where possible, to the community where the seminar is taking place.
- ▶ **Demonstration Program on Economic Development.** HUD's Office of Native American Programs, as part of its FY 2000 budget, proposes a demonstration program to improve the utilization of the Indian Community Development Block Grant and Indian Housing Block Grant Program. The two programs combined represent a significant resource for economic or business development.
- ▶ **Indian Graduate Business Fellowships.** The Department of Justice's Office of Native American Programs proposes the creation of an Indian Graduate Business Fellowships program in order to address the need for greater managerial and financial expertise in Indian country. In other fields, such as law, Federal Indian fellowship programs have been extremely helpful in developing qualified Indian professionals to serve the Federal and tribal governments as well as the private sector. Experience has shown that a targeted Federal Indian fellowship program for graduate students in business related fields would boost tribal human resources infrastructure and assist in long-term efforts to boost Indian economies. Appropriate legislation and funding would be needed to support the initiative, which could be modeled after the Indian Health Service's Indians into Medicine Program.

B. The Subcommittee also has identified the following actions that currently are being developed and implemented that will have an impact on tribal economic development efforts:

- ▶ **Study on Lending and Investing in Indian Country.** The Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) Fund will be conducting a study on lending and investment practices on Indian reservations and other land held in trust by the United States. The components of the study are to (1) identify barriers to private financing; (2) identify the

impact of such barriers on access to capital and credit for Native American populations; and (3) to submit a report to the President and Congress with the findings of the study, recommendations to any necessary statutory and regulatory changes to existing Federal programs, and policy recommendations for community development financial institutions, insured depository institutions, secondary market institutions, and private sector capital institutions. In conjunction with the study, the Fund will develop an action plan to determine better ways for accessing credit and lending for Native American communities. This action plan will be developed through a series of workshops in cooperation with Tribal and private sector participation.

- ▶ **Handbook on "American Indian Reservations and Trust Areas."** Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA) will update this publication, which is an important resource for persons interested in doing business on reservations. The handbook provides valuable economic data on all American Indian and Alaska Native communities. Over 5,000 copies of the 1996 version have been distributed to date. EDA also will make the existing handbook available on its web site by March, 1999.
- ▶ **Implementation of One-Stop Mortgage Center Initiative.** Increasing home-ownership opportunities and access to capital in American Indian and Alaska Native communities was recognized by President Clinton as an integral part of economic development. In early August, the President issued an Executive Order tasking HUD and the Department of Treasury to partner with tribal governments, pertinent federal agencies and private partners, to initiate a pilot project to streamline the mortgage lending process in Indian country. Work is underway on the selection and start-up of the pilot projects.
- ▶ **Protection of Native American Intellectual Property.** Commerce's Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) proposes to conduct a workshop on how to protect intellectual property through obtaining a patent or trademark. The workshop is timely in light of legislation recently signed by President Clinton that directs PTO to study the protection of official tribal symbols from trademark infringement. The workshop would be held in conjunction with the annual conference of the American Indian Science and Engineering Society.
- ▶ **Study on Tribal Technology Infrastructure.** Recognizing the importance of ensuring that Indian communities fully participate in the new information economy, President Clinton's August 6 Memorandum directed the Commerce Department to conduct a study on the state of infrastructure technology needs. EDA will conduct the study, which is due for completion by May, 1999. In addition, Commerce is exploring in general how to help rural and urban distressed communities with a technology-based economic development strategy, including physical infrastructure and upgrading the skills of the local workforce.

#### IV. GOING FORWARD: IDENTIFYING AND ADDRESSING GAPS

In order to address the on-going need for improved Federal coordination, the Subcommittee will

continue to work on a regular basis to identify and address any gaps in the delivery of economic development information and assistance to Indian country. As part of its deliberative process, the Subcommittee will consider whether administrative or legislative remedies are required to create new authority for, or remove barriers to, improving Federal tribal economic development efforts. For example, in April, 1998, Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell introduced S. 2010, the "Native American Business Development, Trade Promotion and Tourism Act of 1998." The BIA's FY 2000 proposal for a Native American Economic Development Access Center is designed, in part, to address the concerns raised by the legislation.

An important part of the Subcommittee's on-going efforts will involve building partnerships with national organizations, such as the National Congress of American Indians and the National Indian Business Association, in order to identify gaps and solutions in the provision of Federal economic development assistance and to help identify specific tribal educational needs (e.g., how to do bond structurings).

## V. CLOSING

As a result of the President's Memorandum, and the work of the Subcommittee to date, we are entering a new era of Federal cooperation in the area of Indian economic development. There is a renewed sense of excitement and urgency about building upon the progress already made at the *Building Economic Self-Determination in Indian Communities* conference and moving in a direction that will ensure that tribal communities reap the greatest benefits from Federal economic development efforts for generations to come. Under the auspices of The White House Domestic Policy Council Working Group on American Indians and Alaska Natives, and in partnership with the tribes, Indian-owned businesses, the private sector, and non-profit organizations, the members of the Subcommittee stand committed to the goals outlined in this report and, ultimately, to bringing access to Federal economic development programs and initiatives to a new and unprecedented level throughout Indian country.

## APPENDIX B

### Bureau of Indian Affairs U.S. Department of Interior

#### Outline of the FY 2000 Budget Proposal for a Native American Economic Development Access Center

Prospective clients would interface with the Center through a number of ways: (1) an Internet web page; (2) direct telephone technical assistance via a toll-free 800-number; (3) on-site community interaction with business specialists; (4) printed literature; and (5) documentation and instructional CDs. Incoming inquiries would receive almost immediate feedback and response. To make the service easier to use, the center would provide information and technical assistance on a topical basis, so that prospective clients do not need to know the name of a specific agency or program before utilizing the service. Specifically, the Center would have the following components:

**Internet resources** – The development of a website that would house a **comprehensive inventory of available federal programs** with detailed descriptions of how they may be used by the Indian community. The database will include a user-friendly search engine that would permit users to clearly define their interests and the type of assistance they are seeking in order to better focus their attention to Federal programs that can provide financial and technical assistance. Each participating agency would have access to the BIA-operated web site where they could enter and update the descriptions of all operating programs on a regular basis.

An online **"ask the expert"** module which permits users to ask specific questions about federal programs, their use and general questions about economic ventures and opportunities in Indian Country. Questions will be received in one central site (the Bureau of Indian Affairs) and transmitted via e-mail to the appropriate federal agency for direct answering. Monitoring to ensure that questions are responded to in a timely manner will be conducted by the central web master. A permanent record of incoming questions will be maintained and used to develop user profiles and guide future program efforts.

The web site will maintain a **library of on-line resources**, including links to other Federal agency web sites that include economic development information relevant to Indian Country as well as other private, non-profit information resources.

**Telephone Assistance** – Because many people do not yet have access to Internet resources, an **"800" number** will be established and widely advertised for the purpose of providing direct discussions with Tribes, Indian individuals and others with questions on doing business in Indian Country. Calls will come into a central site (Bureau of Indian Affairs) and either will be answered directly or forwarded to an appropriate party at another federal entity where a more precise answer may be found. A database will be created to record general information regarding incoming calls and the manner in which they were answered. The "800" line would be open from 9:00 a.m. EST until 8:00 p.m. EST to ensure that coverage is available for all time zones.

**On-site Technical Assistance** - In-depth technical assistance is usually best provided in face-to-face communications. However, many tribes and Indian individuals do not have access to local community resources to assist them in their business development efforts. An effort to provide for more direct technical assistance by knowledgeable federal and private resources can greatly enhance the potential for new business ventures. As outlined in the report, the center will work to promote closer cooperation and information-sharing between SBA's and MBDA's tribal business information centers and organize a series of on-site "Business Deals on Wheels" seminars.

**Printed Materials** - Each federal agency with programs which can assist economic development activities will provide **informational brochures, pamphlets, etc.**, to the BIA's Center from which the public may request general information (more specific requests such as for regulations would be forwarded to the appropriate agency). A written version of the website containing federal program inventory would be developed so that persons without Internet access may also be able to have access to important Federal program information.

**Instructional CD ROMs** - Where appropriate, federal agencies will seek to place large volumes of written materials, forms, application criteria, etc., on CDs which can be made available to Tribes and individual Indians. CDs are a more efficient method for distribution of large quantities of written information. **Computer-based instructional CDs** also may be developed, which can be used as learning tools on how to conduct business in Indian Country, how to develop business plans for Indian entrepreneurs and Tribes, and other related topics. The BIA's "*Sharing Our Dream – Doing Business in Indian Country*" is an excellent example of how CD's can be used by tribes in their marketing and other business-related efforts. Additional titles that could be developed by the center include:

- Creating a business plan for small businesses
- Sample legal documents for Tribal governments
- Processing leases for homeownership (in development)
- Best practices in Indian economic development

## MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Among The Following Federal Entities

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT - DOMESTIC POLICY COUNCIL  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY  
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

### I. PURPOSE

This agreement between the federal entities listed above is intended to establish a close working relationship among federal partners in the development of a strategy for economic development in Indian country. The central objective of this effort is establishing a more effective and efficient approach to providing information, technical assistance and training to tribes and tribal members.

### II. BACKGROUND

In August, 1998, President Clinton issued a Presidential Memorandum directing the Department of Interior, the Department of Commerce and the Small Business Administration, with the assistance of other federal partners, to develop a strategic plan coordinating existing economic development initiatives for Native American and Alaska native communities. Similarly, the United States Congress has held a series of hearings on barriers to economic development in Indian country.

The federal partners and the tribes have recognized that there are many resources available to tribal governments and individual Native Americans that are not being fully utilized because there is a lack of knowledge on how these resources can best be accessed. As a result, a key component in the economic strategy is the development of a more aggressive outreach effort to Indian communities to insure that they are able to make full utilization of the existing economic tools and resources made available through the federal government. The outreach effort's central theme is the creation of an access

center for Tribes and individuals in the Department of Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs that is supported by federal entities who are responsible for Indian economic development.

Therefore, the above federal entities have entered into this agreement to address the needs of today's Indian communities in the area of economic development.

### III. STATUTORY AUTHORITIES

Each participating federal entity will use their existing statutory authority to carry out the responsibilities under this Memorandum of Understanding. The Department of Interior will seek additional appropriations to develop, staff and administer the technical assistance center that is the cornerstone of the economic strategy.

Nothing in this agreement shall lessen the responsibilities or authorities of any of the federal entities included in the Memorandum of Understanding.

### IV. SUBSTANCE OF AGREEMENT

#### 1) Creation of an access center

- a) The agencies agree to develop, maintain and annually update an access center that will be located in the Department of Interior – Bureau of Indian Affairs.
- i) Each participating federal entity will detail one staff member to the Access Center for a period of not less than 30 days and not more than 180 days prior to the official opening of the Access Center to develop and organize agency specific materials which will be made available for the public's use.
- ii) Each participating federal entity will prepare a detailed outline of their agency's organization for use by Access Center staff when interacting with the public. The outline should include an updated organizational chart that lists program responsibilities, phone and fax numbers and e-mail addresses.
- iii) Each participating federal entity will develop an internal procedure for insuring that all calls referred by the Access Center are answered in a prompt and complete manner.
- iv) Each participating federal entity will provide in-depth training to the staff of the Access Center prior to its official opening. The training shall include general programmatic information on the participating federal entity's basic programs and available assistance and outlines which questions could be answered directly by the Access Center and which should be referred to the entity.

- b) Each participating federal entity agrees to replace instructional materials, references and organizational charts as they are modified. This includes replacing contact points within the organization as the situation arises and immediately notifying the Access Center personnel.
- c) The Domestic Policy Council's Indian Working Group shall contact each participating federal entity for an annual meeting at which Access Center procedures, policies and administration are reviewed and modified as necessary to insure that all participating federal entities are being properly represented.

## **2) Development of Technical Assistance Matrices**

- a) All participating federal entities will assign staff as necessary in order to develop a series of matrices to be used for answering incoming questions from the public.
- b) The matrices shall represent as wide a variety of questions as possible and shall incorporate individual agency outlines. They will be constructed in a format that provides for rapid response to the public on a wide variety of topics.
- c) The matrices shall be updated at least annually.

## **3) Establishment of a Toll-free Telephone Line**

- a) The Department of Interior agrees to purchase the services of a toll-free telephone line which Tribes, businesses, organizations and individuals may use to access the Access Center.
  - i) The toll-free access shall be staffed daily from 9:00 a.m. eastern time to 8:00 p.m. eastern time by Access Center personnel employed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs' Office of Economic Development
  - ii) Interior will explore a system of "prompts" for the incoming line which insure that callers are fully advised of all available options. The "prompts" will be updated as necessary.
  - iii) Interior will develop an internal database for logging calls, monitoring responses and insuring response. Annual reports on usage shall be prepared and distributed to all participating federal entities.
  - iv) Interior will develop marketing materials which will inform the Indian community of the existence of the line and Access Center.
  - v) All participating federal agencies will work closely with Access Center personnel to insure that they receive initial training and regular program updates.



#### **4) Development of an On-line Resource**

- a) The Department of Interior agrees to develop, in collaboration with all participating federal entities, an on-line website that contains an automated database that store program descriptions of all federal programs and resources available to assist the Indian community in economic development.
- b) All participating federal entities agree to enter their respective program materials into the database and to update such information as program materials and information changes. No less than annually will each participating federal entity review their program information.
- c) Included on the website will be a comprehensive listing of URLs to link the site to all other federal websites that contain economic development information. Existing federal websites such as SBA's Pronet will be utilized to the greatest extent possible.
- d) Included on the website will be an on-line ability for users to ask questions of the Access Center and/or participating federal entities. All participating federal entities agree to establish an internal mechanism where questions are answered in less than 14 calendar days. Access Center staff will monitor questions and responses.
- e) An inter-departmental workgroup will be established for the purpose of insuring that the Access Center Website provides the greatest coverage of relevant information.

#### **5) Coordination of Stationary Business Development Centers**

- a) The Small Business Administration and the Department of Commerce shall meet annually to coordinate the activities of their business development centers to insure that there are no redundant services provided and to insure the most comprehensive set of materials are made available at every site.
- b) Each participating federal entity shall work with SBA and Commerce to place all relevant materials at each business information center.
- c) All materials developed for use in the Access Center administered by the Department of Interior shall also be made available for the tribal business information centers.

#### **6) Development of Business Development Seminar Program**

- a) The Domestic Policy Council's Indian Working Group will plan and develop a series of business seminars to be held in tribal community without access to tribal

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business information centers. The seminars will consist of varied curriculum that consists of both general business technical assistance, as well as individual assistance on specific subjects and business opportunities.

- i) Domestic Policy Council's Indian Working Group will develop subject agendas which are relevant to the community in which the seminar is taking place.
- ii) The Department of Interior will be responsible for all logistical arrangements for the seminars and will work closely with the respective tribal government to insure that the subject matter of the seminar meets the needs of the local community.
- iii) The Department of Interior will be responsible for all marketing and on-site management of the seminar.
- b) Each participating federal entity may be asked to participate in the seminar depending on the particular needs of the individual community. Agencies will be responsible for selecting trainers that are knowledgeable and competent instructors. Agencies will be responsible for travel and per diem costs for their employees.
- c) The schedule of seminars will be developed with input from all participating federal entities and coordinated by the Domestic Policy Council's Indian Working Group

#### **7) Dissemination of Written Materials**

- a) Each participating federal entity may provide a supply of promotional and informational materials regarding their programs to the Access Center for distribution upon request from Tribes, individuals, businesses and other interested parties.
- b) The Access Center will provide written materials on the use of the Access Center itself to the public.
- c) A written inventory of the materials available in the Access Center and of all existing federal programs shall be developed with input from all participating federal entities.

#### **8) On-going Maintenance of the Access Center**

- a) All participating federal entities shall meet to discuss Access Center operations no less than every six months.

- b) Participating federal entities may be requested by the Department of Interior to assist in the Access Center for short durations of time when Access Center are unavailable to handle incoming traffic.
- c) The Department of Interior will provide activity information of the Access Center on an annual basis to the participating federal entities and the Domestic Policy Council.
- d) The Access Center personnel shall not attempt to answer questions of a policy nature. All such questions shall be forwarded to the respective agency. The Access Center personnel shall not provide written responses to users on specific program issues at any time. The role of the Access Center is to disseminate general information and to provide direction to users to other federal agencies for more specific materials and resources.
- e) The Department of Interior shall be responsible for the over-all marketing of the Access Center, insuring that its existence is widely known in the Native American community. Marketing shall be conducted through brochures, posters, public service announcements and other forms of mass media communications.

#### V. PERIOD OF AGREEMENT

The participating federal entities agree to begin implementing this agreement immediately upon execution by all parties. This agreement will be effective indefinitely. It may be modified by mutual consent or terminated by agreement from all parties.

This agreement is subject to the Department of Interior's receipt of additional appropriations specifically for the creation of the Access Center.

#### VI. NAME AND ADDRESSES OF PARTICIPATING ENTITIES

(to be added)

#### VII. PRIMARY AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES

(to be added)